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THE CLIFF SCENERY OF DONEGAL.

By CHARLES EDWARDES.

PERHAPS the best idea of the magnitude and chaotic character of Donegal's Cliffs may be had by walking from Glen Columbkille to Ardara. It is a hard day's work, but most impressive, and, towards Maghera, thrilling into the bargain. Road or track there is none; nor is there a village until Maghera is reached. In two only of the glens which have to be crossed to keep the cliff-line are there houses. A few bright patches of green about the thatched little homesteads betoken cultivation of a sort. The bark of a vigilant sheep-dog tells of the flocks scattered over the mountains, and warns you to mind your calves. Else, wild precipitous headlands, white-maned waves thundering against the rocks, and the gray desolation of the inland granite hills, with their multitude of loughs, great and small—these and nothing besides make up the Donegal before you. Yet stay; high over yonder bleak mountain you may see two birds of unusual size. They are eagles. Without them, the savagery of your surroundings would be incomplete.

Slieve League, south of Glen Columbkille, is a superb introduction to Donegal's coast splendours, approaching them from the county town. There is nothing like Slieve League in the realm. In less than half a mile from the sea the mountain rears its height of nearly two thousand feet. The walk from Carrigan Head, by springy down and heather, to Slieve League's summit—ever with the Atlantic throbbing far down on your left hand—is a memorable experience. Carrigan Head is seven hundred and forty-five feet high, and its cliffs fall as nearly sheer as may be. But it seems dwarfed by the amazing face of Slieve League, which towers red and white and green close by, some three times its own height. One could sit for a day on the green plateau of the Bunglass headland—still nearer to Slieve League—watching the colours of the mountain face, and the

blue Atlantic beating itself into a fury at its base. If the sky is angry overhead, so much the better for Slieve League's majesty, though your courage may be the more severely tested if you propose to scale it by the One Man Pass. The mountain rises from Bunglass by the coast in a series of tooth-like pinnacles and steep slopes. The worst of these is the One Man Pass, a reach of some fifty feet of smooth quartzose rock, at an angle of about forty-five degrees, two feet only in width, with an alarming drop to the sea on the left hand, and a long abrupt slope below on the right. In a strong wind, the One Man Pass might well prove a fatal lure to ambition; and even on a calm day, discretion bids the tourist take it on hands and knees rather than with dignified erectness. Slieve League is matchless.

The walk from Glen Columbkille is, however, even wilder than Slieve League. Glen, as it is more curiously called, is dedicated to St Columb. There are ancient crosses by its little roadways, and of course a holy well, with, hard by, the conventional huge heap of penitential stones, representing a sad number of sins. St Columb's Well holds some of the muddiest water in Donegal. The cups which lie by it are incentives rather to mortification than refreshment. Still, none but a very callous tourist will refuse to put his lips to the holy fluid, after having clambered up the side of Glen Head to the recess which holds it.

It was a saint's day in Glen when I set to work to cross the recess for my initial climb towards the Sturrall. The church bell tinkled musically. Lads and lasses—the latter bright in scarlet and green, with, oh, such tall bonnets!—were coming from the cottages far and near to the church. They trod barefoot, fingering their rosaries, and carrying their boots in their hands to the church porch. But each holy cross was for them an occasion of rest and prayer. It was good to see them grouped on their knees thus by the roadside, and to hear the murmur of their petitioning.

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The bright colours and the high bonnets were not such a dreadful incongruity, after all. Besides, I had but to gaze westwards, and there, framed between Glen Head's precipice—the twin of Carrigan Head in elevation—and the sharp rocks towards Rossan Point, was the bright blue Atlantic. The day was a perfect summer day. Had it not been, I should have hesitated ere beginning this twenty-mile cliff walk, about which even the most modern of guide-books shirked the responsibility of giving information.

I had one safe rule of conduct—to cling to the coast—and for ten hours I clung to it, ere I got to my bourn for the night, hungry and tired beyond description.

The Sturrall is, after Glen Head, the first cape of mark. It is approached by a neck as objectionable as Slieve League's One Man Pass. From its six-hundred-feet cliffs the view south to Rossan and north to Aran is remarkable. Thence the coast-line drops to a chasm called the Sawpit, near which are the poor cottages of Port. Here the pedestrian has a mild foretaste of the difficulties that he will have to encounter ere his day's walk is over. The limestone rocks fall abruptly towards the Atlantic—chafing among the splintered cliffs and needles which stud Port's little bay—and over their edge a series of streams hurl themselves point-blank into the sea. Some nice movement is needful to negotiate these rocks and streams, and finally descend to cross the inlet for the immediate ascent of Tormore Head.

Tormore Head is eight hundred and fifteen feet high, and is mainly perpendicular. The view hence reaches to Mayo in the south and Aran in the north. Errigal's fine white pyramid stands inland most conspicuously among the dark masses of Donegal's mountains. The headland has a fine riven face seawards, and an eccentric islet rock shaped like a Doge's cap, and itself rather higher than St Paul's Cathedral, adds to its picturesqueness. The yellow sands of Loughros Bay, and the yellow and red gleams of the cliffs of Puliska, immediately near to the north, must be noticed from this bold promontory, if the wind be civil enough to leave you any thought of the prospect.

From Tormore Head there was another descent to the sea-level at Puliska. Four gray cottages indicated the population of this recess, by which a little stream drains into the Atlantic. Away, a mile or two inland, lies Lough Anaffrin, with a reputation for two things: its trout, and its difficulty of access for the angler. I saw it from the high land that starts from the other side of Puliska's glen—a pretty pool, with humpy, olive, green, and white hills hugging it round. Under gloomy weather, no lough could be more desolately situated.

On the Puliska hill-side I broke my fast among the heather and bog-myrtle. Believe it or not, the slope was here so steep that I could hardly keep the recumbent position I sought. But there was an ice-cold spring among the heather, near a ferny depression, which was not to be passed with neglect; and so I rested for half an hour, holding on to the heather tufts, staring at the prevalent beauty and

bleakness while I smoked a cigarette, and listened to the piping of the gulls and the rhythmical beat of the sea against the rocks.

The coast-line turns almost due east from Puliska's cliffs, and still I kept my height of hundreds of feet above the sea. Donegal's broken headlands to the north were now immediately in view, and engaging indeed they looked, with the streaks of sunlight caught by the tongues of sand between them. Farther north, however, black darkness brooded over the mountain tops. It seemed probable that the weather might change for the worse ere I was half-way in my excursion. I hurried on, therefore, rising and falling with the rude undulations of the land, now sticking hard in bog, now speeding down heathery slopes, only to be confronted, a few minutes later, with formidable acclivities that were not to be shirked.

Soon the mountain mass of Slievetoovey had to be crossed, or rather its roots, which drop towards the sea with much precipitousness and irregularity. The work grew harder. The muscles of my legs began to revolt against the continued strain, and again and again I lay on the heather and listened to the dirge of the gulls. It was on one of these occasions that I espied the eagles over Slievetoovey's bald brow. I heard more of them later. They had paid lavish attention to the lambs during the spring, and it was feared that they had a nest of eaglets in their eyrie, which was known to be in a cleft impossible to reach.

The cliffs here varied between a height of four and six hundred feet. Their reddish and white faces were for gulls alone. And in Gull Island, a tiny point of rock near the shore, these noisy birds find an admirable breeding-place, absolutely free from human intrusion.

For two more weary but magnificent hours I strove onwards to my goal. The nearing of the Loughros peninsula across the sands told me I was approaching Maghera. But just when I hoped I might descend easily into the village, I was faced with a mountain spur falling almost perpendicularly into Loughros Bay, and the only apparent way of traversing which was by a sheep-track scratched midway on the seaward face of the precipice. I sat down and smoked and eyed my task. How was I to know whither this frightful path might lead me?

It was during my prolonged hesitancy that a stalwart, apple-cheeked man, with loose waving hair, came upon me, attended by two fine boys, and greeted me in an open-hearted manner very rare in Donegal. He, too, was bound for Maghera. He lived there, had been born there, and would probably die there. He had grazing on the mountains for a few sheep, which he had been inspecting. And now, if I would please to follow him, he would lead the way. He suspected there were few such bad places in Ireland, and none in England. Down below, however, it would be all right, for we should come upon one of the new roads ('Balfour's road' he called it, believing it named after the contractor). This went straight to Ardara, six miles farther; and the pity was that it was getting so thick with grass, though so recently made.

My guide not only led me across this precipice with much genuine regard for my safety, turning now and again to ask, 'You're sure, now, you aren't afraid?' But, without any collusion with his father, one of the boys invariably, where it was possible, took a lower sheep-track, so that his head and shoulders might appear as a sort of guard betwixt me and the sea or sands below. I could see in the lad's face that he did it out of concern for me, though, when I laughingly challenged him with it, he blushed and prettily denied that it was so. 'Och sure,' burst forth the man, 'and it's possible they'd do it, for they're good boys, both: not like the crathurs in towns. They've niver learnt a single bad thing, them boys—they're as God made 'em, just!'

Down in miserable Maghera—a collection of about a score of straw huts—I rested for half an hour in my guide's house. His wife knew no English; but she brought the iron pot of cold stirabout and set it on a bench before me, with a big horn spoon that I could just get into my mouth. The floor of the hut was littered with new-cut hay—as sweet a carpet as you could wish, though the black earth was under it. Of furniture there was none worth mentioning except a bedstead under the eave, between the sod fire and the bare rough stone wall. It had no mattress and no bed on it, only a faded quilt, doubled, and a blanket. Of course there was a cradle, however, and one of the lads set himself to rock it the moment he entered, with his eyes fast on me the whole time. And while I trifled with the stirabout, the master of this establishment told me his simple tale. As a young man he had hesitated long between staying at Maghera or going to America. He rather fancied America. 'But, arrah, there was Biddy there; and so we made a match of it when we was quite young; and there's eight of 'em (pointing at his offspring) already, and it's a poor man I'll be always, at all, at all!'

'But a happy one into the bargain, I hope?' said I.

'Och, yis, praise be God!' he replied.

It was rare to see the sparkle of pleasure in Biddy's eyes, honest, hard-working soul, and in the boys themselves, when I gave them a coin apiece. The poor woman's grip of the hand at parting was the sincerest I felt in Donegal. Her husband would not let me go unaccompanied for more than a mile on my way towards Ardara, having first carried me pickaback across a stream.

Bloody Foreland, the extreme north-western corner of Ireland, is not scenically so sensational as you would, from its name, suppose it might be. The coast is not here at all bold. The actual corner of the country is a practical mixture of oat-patches, grazing land of the very worst kind, and the most miserable of hovels. The Irish of the Foreland are in an abject state of poverty. The interest of the place is thus of an unexpected kind. The Foreland Hill, however, is worth ascending. It is a round lump of land about a thousand feet high, more than a mile from the coast, north and west. Hence the various islets off the shore (divers Inishies) are seen clearly. So is

Tory Island, itself much more attractive than the Foreland, both archaeologically and for its cliffs and isolation. So, too, is the great mass of Horn Head, to the north-east. From the Foreland one day, therefore, having walked thither from Gweedore, I made down the heathery slopes and across the bogs for Dunfanagh, which stands at the neck of the Horn Head Peninsula. All told, it was a stout day's work. Even had not my legs informed me at the close, I might have known as much from the tone with which they asked in Dunfanagh—'Sure, you've niver thravelled it?' the verb 'to travel' being in Ireland used constantly for the verb 'to walk.' The inquiry was made in a tone suitable for the words, 'You've never escaped hanging, have you?'

Horn Head is a worthy peer of Slieve League, Glen Head, Tormore Head, and the other glorious sea-cliffs of Donegal. It is more visited than all the others. That, of course, is because of its proximity to a town—though it be but an Irish country town, some twenty miles from a railway.

Look at the map and see the magnitude of Horn Head. The entire peninsula, an area of six or seven square miles, belongs to the promontory. Throughout its coast-line, the rocks are uniformly impressive, though they culminate in grandeur at the northern extremity. You may thus spend an entire day on Horn Head and yet not exhaust its glories. Inland, it resolves itself into heathery dimples and miniature downs, the latter teeming with rabbits. I never saw so many of these dainties in an afternoon as during a ramble—in which I lost myself—about the western part of the Head. Many of them in their alarm seemed to take to the cliffs and leap plump into the Atlantic. Doubtless, however, they did but make feint of tragedy, to see how it would affect their invader's nerves.

At the point, the Head is almost six hundred and twenty feet perpendicular. Seen from a distance and under certain aspects, the rocks really do show something of the horn shape, and it is difficult to stand on their apex without a tremor of awe. The winds and rains have shattered the crest of the cliff badly. As you lie on your perch, you see splits all about you, and, peering over the edge at the wailing gulls, you mark other spacious rifts and lacerations. Daily, something of the huge headland crumbles away. 'Why, you ask yourself—it is an unpleasant inquiry—should not your particular support go like the rest, and why not soon—even immediately—rather than late?' The host of sea-birds all up the cliff is so great that out of question people come here to have what they call 'a little sport.' At the best, it is poor sport. Still, you for one would not care to run the risk of the effects upon the dilapidated rocks of even a common fowling-piece's reverberation.

On Horn Head, as on Carrigan Head, Glen Head, and the Foreland, are the ruins of a signal tower. A hundred years ago these towers were important features in the national defence. It was essential then to be ever on the lookout for the French. Their usage has now, of course, gone from them utterly. Even

Horn Head's later service as a lookout in the interests of merchant ships has fallen into desuetude. The telegraph has disestablished the signal tower. Tory Island does the work Horn Head used to do.

The men who, years back, were wont to have their dwelling on the Head, close to the edge of the great cliff, must have lived through some thrilling storms. I myself have slept in the Cape Wrath lighthouse on a wild autumnal night, and been yelled to sleep by the winds. For once in a way, I should dearly like to try a night on Horn Head. But in its present roofless and broken state, the signal tower offers no sufficiently alluring inducements for the enterprise. When the Horn Head Hotel is built on its site, there may be a chance for me and those like me. In the meantime, there is no prospect of such an hotel; nor would an insurance company think well of its stability if it were to arise here.

With Horn Head my notice of the Donegal cliff scenery may end. It is far from complete. I have said nothing of Aran's rocks and the headlands east of Horn Head. But it may at any rate suggest to the tourist in search of the picturesque that Donegal—so miserable to the humanitarian—is likely to give him his fill of the sublime and beautiful in nature.

AT MARKET VALUE.*

By GRANT ALLEN,

Author of *This Mortal Coil*, *Blood Royal*, *The Scallywag*, &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.—A LITERARY DÉBUT.

AFTER that serious accident, Arnold Willoughby lay ill in his bunk for several days before he felt fit for anything. Meanwhile, as is the wont of sailor folk on such hard voyages, he was left entirely to himself, or scantly tended at moments of leisure by his rough companions. At last, one day, more to still the throbs of pain in his shattered right hand than anything else, he asked for the manuscript of his Venetian cipher.

'Oh, that?' his messmate said, as soon as Arnold had clearly explained just what it was he wanted. 'That bundle o' yaller papers! I threw them out one day. A pack o' rubbish! I thought 'twant nothing.'

'What? Threw it overboard?' Arnold exclaimed, taken aback, and horrified at such vandalism.

The messmate nodded. 'Yes, th' old yaller un,' he answered. 'Them loose sheets, all torn an' stained, if that's what you mean. They wan't up to much. I didn't set no store by 'em.'

'And the note-books?' Arnold asked, with that little tremor of fear which comes over one when one fancies the work of months may have been destroyed or rendered useless by some casual piece of unthinking carelessness.

'Oh, the note-books? No, not them; they're safe enough in yonder,' the sailor answered, nodding backward toward the locker by the bunk. 'I thought they was more like, and I didn't chuck 'em.'

'Get them out,' Arnold cried nervously.

'Let me see them. I want them.' It occurred to him that in his present necessity he might be able to make something out of his painstaking translation, even if the original manuscript itself had really perished.

The sailor brought them out. Arnold glanced through them rapidly. Yes, yes; they were all there, quite safe; and as the drowning man clings to the proverbial straw, so Arnold Willoughby in his need clung to that precious manuscript. He laid it carefully under his pillow when he slept, and he spent a large part of his waking time in polishing and improving the diction of his translation.

When at last they returned to Dundee, Arnold found he had to go into hospital for a fortnight. No sooner was he out again, however, than he made up his mind, maimed hand and all, to go up to London and look out for Kathleen Hesslegrave. The impression printed upon his brain by that episode of the icebergs persisted with double force now he was fairly ashore again. Should he not give his one love at least the chance of proving herself a truer woman than he had ever thought her?

He went up to London by sea, to save expense. As soon as he landed, he took a room in a small lodging-house in the seafaring quarter. Then he set to work at once to hunt up the London Directory so as to discover if he could where the Hesslegraves were living.

He knew nothing, of course, of Mrs Hesslegrave's death; but he saw by the Directory that she was no longer ensconced in the old rooms at Kensington. The only Hesslegrave now known to the big red volume, in fact, was Mr Reginald Hesslegrave, of Capel Court, City, set down, with half-a-dozen other assorted names, for a flat in a small lodging-house in the abyss of Brompton.

Now, Arnold remembered quite well that Kathleen's brother was named Reginald; so, to the unfashionable lodging-house in the abyss of Brompton he directed his steps accordingly. 'Is Mrs Hesslegrave living here?' he asked the slipshod maid who opened the door to him.

The slipshod maid mumbled 'Yes' in an inarticulate voice, holding the door in her hand at the same time, after the fashion of her kind, as if to bar his entrance; but Arnold slipped past her sideways by a strategic movement; and the slipshod maid, accepting accomplished facts, showed him up with a very bad grace to the rooms on the first floor which Reggie had occupied before his marriage, and which he was now compelled by hard decree of fate to share with Florrie.

The slipshod maid pushed open the door, and with the muttered words, 'Gentleman to see you, mum—Mr Wilby,' disappeared downstairs again with shuffling rapidity.

But the moment Arnold found himself face to face with the vision of beauty in the fluffy black hair, cut short all over, and frizzed like a Papuan's, he saw at once this couldn't be *his* Mrs Hesslegrave. 'I beg your pardon,' he said, hesitating. 'I think there must be some mistake. I wanted to see Mrs Hesslegrave.'

'I am Mrs Hesslegrave,' Florrie answered with dignity. Five feet two can be dignified when it makes its mind up to it.

Arnold started a little. 'Then, I suppose, you must be Mr Reginald Hesslegrave's wife,' he exclaimed, taken aback. 'I didn't know he was married.'

'He's not been married very long,' Florrie admitted with her pretty coquettish smile, which recent misfortunes had not entirely clouded. 'Did you want to see Reggie? He's just now come in, and he'll be down in a minute.'

Arnold took a seat and waited; but he couldn't resist the temptation to ask at once, meanwhile, the latest tidings of Kathleen. Florrie had by this time acquired from her husband a considerable dislike of that hard-hearted woman, who wouldn't marry a rich man—such an easy thing to do—on purpose because she didn't want to be of use to dear Reggie. So her answers were of a sort which made Arnold suspect she didn't particularly care for her newly acquired sister-in-law. By the time Reggie came down, indeed, she had made her position tolerably plain to Arnold, and had also managed, with innate feminine astuteness, to arrive at the conclusion that this was the Other Man whom Kathleen had known a couple of years ago at Venice. Nay, so convinced was she of this fact, that she made some little excuse to leave Arnold alone in the room for a minute while she ran up-stairs to communicate her suspicions on the point to Reggie. This vile interloper, the Other Man, must be promptly crushed in the interests of the family. When Reggie himself at last descended, he fully shared Florrie's view; the very eagerness with which the stranger asked after Kitty's health showed Reggie at once he had very good reasons for wishing to see her.

Now Reggie, though a silly young man, was by no means a fool where his own interests were concerned; on the contrary, he was well endowed with that intuitive cunning which enables a man to find out at once whatever is most to his personal advantage. So, having arrived instinctively at the conclusion that this was the Other Fellow of whom his sister had spoken, he proceeded, as he phrased it himself, 'to put a spoke in the Other Fellow's wheel' on the subject of Kathleen. 'Oh no, my sister's not in town,' he said with a slight smile, and a quick side-glance at Florrie, as a warning that she was not on any account to contradict this flagrant departure from historical accuracy; 'she's gone down into the country—to Cromer, in fact,' Reggie continued, growing bolder in the details of his romance as he eyed Arnold Willoughby. 'She's going to stay there with some friends of ours, to meet another old Venetian acquaintance whom I dare-say you knew—a charming young American, Mr Rufus Mortimer.'

Reggie delivered this home-thrust direct, watching his visitor's face as he did so to see whether it roused any appreciable emotion; and he was not disappointed with the result of his clever move. It was 'Check!' most decidedly. Arnold Willoughby gave a sudden start. 'Rufus Mortimer!' he exclaimed. 'She's going down to Cromer to stop with some friends in the same house with Rufus Mortimer?'

'Yes,' Reggie answered carelessly. Then he smiled to himself a curious and very significant smile. 'The fact is,' he went on boldly, determined to make that spoke in the Other Fellow's wheel a good big round one while he was about it, 'they're very thick together just now, our Kitty and the American. Between ourselves, as you're a friend of the family's, and knew the dear old Mater, I don't mind telling you—I rather expect to reckon Rufus Mortimer as my brother-in-law elect before many weeks are over.' And this last remark, so far as Mr Reginald's own expectations were concerned, could not be condemned as wholly untruthful.

'Are they engaged, then?' Arnold asked, quivering. His worst fears were confirmed. Failing the Earl in disguise, Kathleen had flung herself into the arms of the American millionaire, as next best among her chances.

'Well, not exactly engaged, don't you know,' Reggie responded airily. 'Not quite what you can call engaged, perhaps. But it's an understood thing all the same in the family.'

Arnold Willoughby's heart sank like lead. He didn't know why, but somehow, ever since that afternoon in the ice-channel, he had cherished, day and night, a sort of irrational, instinctive belief that, after all, he was mistaken, and that Kathleen loved him. Yet now, he saw once more he was in error on that point; she was really nothing more than the self-seeking, money-loving, position-hunting girl her own mother had so frankly represented her to be that fateful day in the rooms by the Piazza.

Poor Kathleen! She was indeed unfortunate in her relations. At Venice, it was Mrs Hesslegrave; in London, it was Reggie, who so cruelly misrepresented her to her much misled lover.

Arnold didn't stop long. Nor did he ask for Kathleen's address. After all, if she was really going to marry Rufus Mortimer, it would be a pity for him to intrude at such a moment on her happiness. Mortimer was rich, and would make her comfortable. Money was what she wanted, and if Kathleen wanted it—

Even as he thought that hard thought, he broke off in his own mind suddenly. No, no; it wasn't money she wanted, his beautiful, innocent Kathleen; of that he felt certain. And yet, if she really meant to marry Rufus Mortimer, it was at least his duty not to step in now between the prospective bride and her rich new lover, who could do so much more for her than ever he himself could do.

As soon as he was gone, Master Reggie turned philosophically to Florrie, and observed with a smile: 'I settled *his* hash, I flatter myself. *He* won't bother her any more. I've sent him about his business. And a precious good thing for herself too, if it comes to that: for just fancy a girl like Kitty being tied for life to a fellow in sailor clothes, and 'badly cut at that, with no right hand to brag about!'

But as for Arnold, he took his way sadly down the crowded streets, with the last remnants of a heart well nigh crushed out of him.

However, as long as a man lives, he has to

think about his living. Bread and cheese we must have, though our hearts be breaking. Next day, accordingly, Arnold called at a well-known firm of publishers in the City, Stanley and Lockhart by name, to ask whether any decision had yet been arrived at about the manuscript translation from an Italian original he had sent them by post from Dundee a fortnight earlier.

The senior partner, an acute-looking man, with very little hair on his head to boast of, gazed hard at his visitor. 'Well, yes, Mr Willoughby,' he said, with a dry business smile. 'I've looked at your manuscript, and our reader has reported on it; and I'm free to tell you we think very well of it. It's one of the most brilliant bits of historical fiction we've had submitted to us for a long time.'

'Oh, I beg your pardon,' Arnold interposed, colouring slightly. 'I think you're labouring under a misapprehension. Have you read the Introduction? I there explain that it's translated from an Italian manuscript.'

'Yes, yes,' Mr Stanley broke in, smiling still more broadly. 'I know all that, of course. It's admirable, admirable. Nothing could be better done. Falls in exactly with the current taste for high-spiced and strongly-flavoured historical romance, with a good dash of bloodshed; and the Introduction itself is one of the best parts—so circumstantial and solemn, and with such an innocent air of truth and sincerity.'

'But it is true, you know,' Arnold cried, annoyed at being doubted, which was the one thing a man of his sensitive honour could never put up with. 'I found the manuscript at Venice, in a tiny little shop, exactly under the circumstances I there describe; and I translated it into English during my spare time on board ships in two northern voyages.'

'In-deed!' the publisher replied, with a quiet, self-restrained smile. He was accustomed to dealing with these imaginative authors, some of whom, it is whispered, do not entirely confine their faculty of fiction to mere literary products. 'And where is the manuscript now? It would be an interesting document.'

'Unfortunately, it's lost,' Arnold Willoughby answered, growing hot. 'One of my fellow-sailors took it out of my locker while I was confined to my bunk with this injured hand of mine, and destroyed it or threw it overboard. At any rate, it's not forthcoming. And I'm sorry for that, as it's of historical importance, and of course it would be useful in proving the authenticity and value of the narrative.'

'Very useful indeed,' Mr Stanley replied with a meaning smile, which again annoyed Arnold. 'However, the question now is not as to the authenticity or authorship of the narrative at all, but as to its money's worth for purposes of publication. We will agree that it is essentially a work of fiction. Whether it was written by you, or by Master John Collingham of Holt in Norfolk, it's still a work of fiction. He may have designed it to amuse or to deceive the Council of Ten; but any way, I tell you, he was a first-rate novelist. I deal in these things, and I flatter myself I know

a work of art when I see it.—Well, now, then, let's get to business, Mr Willoughby. What I should propose to do is, to buy the copyright outright from you. And as this is a doubtful venture by a new author, suppose we make you an offer of fifty pounds for the manuscript.'

Arnold's heart gave a wild leap. Fifty pounds! Why, as things now went, 'twas a perfect *Pactolus!* On fifty pounds he could subsist for a twelvemonth. Since he ceased to be Earl of Axminster, he had never for a moment had so large a sum at one time in his possession.

He didn't know he was making a bad bargain; and indeed, so doubtful did his poor little venture seem to himself, that even if some one else of greater experience had stood by his side to warn him against selling a piece of property of unknown value outright like that for the first sum offered, he would probably have answered, and perhaps answered rightly: 'I'd rather take fifty pounds down, and be certain of my money, than speculate on what may, perhaps, be a bad investment.' Fifty pounds down is a big sum to a beginner; and the beginner would most often be justified in jumping at it.

At any rate, Arnold jumped at it. His face flushed with pleasure. 'I should be delighted,' he said, 'to accept such an offer. And the book would come out?'

'At the beginning of the new season.—Very well then, that's settled.' Mr Stanley took up a blank form of agreement lying careless by his side, and filling it in rapidly with name, date, and title, as well as valuable consideration, handed it across forthwith for inspection to Arnold. 'Is that right?' he asked, with a wave of his pen.

'Quite right,' Arnold answered, 'except that of course you mustn't say "written by me." It ought to be "deciphered and translated by me." I can't sell you as mine what I've never written.'

The publisher gave a short sniff of suppressed impatience, but drew his pen half angrily through the peccant words. 'There. Will that satisfy you?' he asked. And Arnold, glancing at it, took up the proffered pen and signed his name at the bottom.

Mr Stanley drew a cheque and handed it over to him. Arnold scanned it and handed it back. 'I'm afraid this won't do,' he said. 'It's crossed, I see, and I happen to have no banking account. Could you kindly give me one drawn simply to bearer?'

'No banking account?' the publisher cried. This was certainly the very queerest sort of literary man he had ever yet come across.

'No,' Arnold answered stoutly. 'You must remember I'm nothing but a common sailor.'

The man of business drew a second cheque, tearing up the first as soon as he had done so. 'But where did you learn Italian?' he asked; 'and how did you pick up all this intimate knowledge of Elizabethan England, and Spain, and Italy?'

'You forget that was all in the manuscript,' Arnold answered simply.

The publisher waved his hand again. 'Twas an impatient wave. There was really no deal-

ing with a fellow like this, who told a lie and stuck to it. 'Ah, true,' he mused reflectively, with the same curious smile. 'Well, Mr Willoughby, I should say you have a great future in fiction before you.'

Arnold hardly knew whether to accept that remark as a compliment or otherwise.

But as he descended the publishers' stairs that morning, he had got rid of the copyright and all property and interest in a work entitled 'An Elizabethan Seadog,' to Messrs Stanley and Lockhart, their heirs and executors, in consideration of the sum of fifty pounds sterling. And Mr Stanley was saying to Mr Lockhart in the privacy of the counting-house: 'I'll tell you what it is, Lockhart, I believe we've got hold of a second Rider Haggard. I never read anything more interesting in my life than this sailor fellow's narrative. It has an air of history about it that's positively astonishing. Heaven knows where he learned to write such English as that; but he writes it admirably.'

TUGBOATS AND THEIR WORK.

TUGBOATS of the present progressive period compare most favourably both in hull and engines with their puny predecessors, which were doubtless held in high esteem when steam as a motive-power afloat first became an accomplished fact. Hitherto, masterful mariners had perforce been content to navigate their short sailing-ships in narrow waters without any assistance other than the unbothered wind, and such sterling seamanship as had been acquired by long experience. Truly, the village spires and the fair fields of home might almost be in full view after a protracted passage from the Far East; all on board gaze wistfully with moist eyes on the dim outline of the land they love; and the shrewd sailor who had the good fortune first, from the slippery shrouds, to sight the chalky cliffs of Old England, following a curious custom of the sea, would have affixed his old shoe to the massive mainmast, not as a votive offering to Father Neptune, but for the more business-like purpose of receiving casual contributions from passengers, not unmindful of dangers overpassed.

An ocean journey was robbed of much of its danger when it was possible for a sailing-ship to obtain the services of a tugboat at either end of the route. One of the earliest engravings of a steam-vessel represents her as a very roughly fashioned tugboat, fitted with a clumsy paddle-wheel, insecurely depending from the stern. She has in tow a warship, with yards squared and sails furled, preparatory to entering port. This vivid suggestion of the application of the steam-engine to maritime purposes was given to the world by Jonathan Hulls in 1737, in a pamphlet entitled, 'A Description and Draught of a new-invented Machine for carrying Vessels or Ships out of or into any Harbour, Port, or River, against Wind or Tide, or in a Calm.' He took out a patent for this invention, which seems to have been far in advance of the age, and came to nought. In 1801, Symington constructed the steam-vessel 'Charlotte Dundas' for the purpose of

towing barges on the Forth and Clyde Canal. She accomplished her allotted work to the satisfaction of her designer, but only ran for about a year, because the canal proprietors were of opinion that the wash from her paddle-wheels would injure the canal banks. Side-wheels had not yet put in an appearance, and her single wheel worked in a well-hole at the stern. Hence it will be readily inferred that the tugboat is the pioneer of those magnificent ocean liners and humbler carrying craft that trade to every port of the round world. Steam had to contend against a horde of prejudices, but has withstood the test of time, and is no longer the harassed handmaiden of canvas. The marine engineer is every day becoming more indispensable; and even now the question is mooted, whether the commander of an ocean steamship should be a sailor or an engineer. The stern-wheel gave way to side-wheels, and the latter are in their turn disappearing before single-screws and twin-screws in tugboats.

A modern tugboat, the 'Fearless,' of San Francisco, California, affords an excellent example of the perfection to which such steam-vessels are gradually proceeding. She is one of the most powerful sea-going steel tugboats in actual service. Her dimensions are as follows: length over all, 153 feet; breadth, 26 feet; depth, 10 feet; and her register tonnage is 365. She is fitted with triple expansion engines of 36-inch stroke, and cylinders of 20, 30, and 50 inches diameter, respectively. Her engines will develop over 1200 horse-power, with a working pressure of 170 pounds; and her total coal capacity is 400 tons, or sufficient to take her four thousand miles at an eight-knot speed without putting in anywhere to replenish her bunkers. She has a powerful electric search-light, and an apparatus for extinguishing fires capable of throwing eight large streams of water at once and without delay upon a burning ship or other object. Her cost was not less than twenty-four thousand pounds; and her model on exhibition at the Chicago Columbian Exposition in 1893 attracted the attention of many visitors. A very large British ship, the 'Honresfeld,' was abandoned not long since in the North Pacific, with her coal cargo of nearly five thousand tons burning fiercely in consequence of spontaneous combustion. She drifted about, and was passed by other vessels weeks later. Eventually, the 'Fearless' went out from San Francisco, intent on towing the burning derelict into a near port, and thus earn a goodly sum as salvage. The quest proved unsuccessful; and the tugboat returned after a stormy experience extending over five thousand miles. Liverpool and London have somewhat similar tugboats thoroughly capable of towing sailing-ships or disabled steamers over very long distances.

A steamship fitted with a single screw is comparatively helpless should her shaft break, or her propeller blades drop off, in mid-ocean. Sail-area in large single-screw steamships is altogether out of proportion to their size, and barely sufficient to maintain steerage-way when every inch of canvas is spread to the best advantage. Hence, twin-screws, despite extra first cost, have made their way, and triple-

screws have put in an appearance on the new United States warship 'Columbia.' A steamer deprived of her motive-power is compelled either to receive assistance from other vessels of the same kind, or to make her way to the nearest port, and cable home for a powerful tugboat to be sent for the purpose of towing her to her destination. Large sums may thus be earned both by trading steamers and specially fitted tugboats. In 1889, a Portuguese screw steamship, the 'Mocambique,' over three thousand tons gross register, broke down at sea while proceeding from Rio Janeiro to Lisbon. She was picked up by the steamship 'Maranheus,' and towed to Ceara. At this place, facilities for repairing her were wanting, and it became necessary that she should be towed back to Rio Janeiro. An English tugboat, the 'Blazer,' was engaged, and left Middlesborough on the 17th of August, called at Las Palmas and St Vincent for coal, and arrived at Ceara on the 5th of September—thus covering a distance of five thousand miles at an average speed of ten knots. A detailed examination of the 'Mocambique' showed that her injuries were more serious than anticipated, and the towage would be difficult. Her shaft was broken inside the stern-tube, which had burst; the propeller hung down across her stern, supported by chains from above; and the after-compartment was full of water. Nevertheless, the 'Blazer' arrived safely at Rio Janeiro with her awkward charge in eighteen days, after an arduous tow, and a visit to Bahia for coal.

The steamship 'Dunedin,' two thousand two hundred tons gross register, broke her shaft in mid-Atlantic, and was towed to Fayal, Azores, by a passing homeward-bound steamship. A screw tugboat of Liverpool, the 'Sarah Jolliffe,' left Milford at midnight on the 12th of July, under orders to bring home the disabled 'Dunedin,' and arrived at Fayal on the 17th. She left for home next day with her tow, and reached Barry Roads without mishap during the morning of the 27th. This totally helpless steamer, fully laden, was thus towed home from the Azores in less than nine days. In March, a new steamer, the 'Yarrowdale,' reached St Vincent, Cape Verds, with only one blade of her propeller remaining. A spare propeller, weighing about five tons, was on board, but could not be fitted, owing to various causes. She was bound from Buenos Ayres to Dunkirk with wool, and some of her cargo must have been left behind, had any discharge taken place in order to get the propeller in position. The underwriters on the cargo having come to an agreement, the tugboat 'Gamecock' was sent out to tow her to Dunkirk. This she safely accomplished within fourteen days. A similar cargo-carrier, the 'Inishowen Head,' arrived at Suez with her tail shaft broken, while bound from Manila to Liverpool with a valuable cargo. The 'Gamecock' went out from England and towed the 'Inishowen Head' to her port of discharge without difficulty.

In 1888 the 'Black Cock' towed the well-known passenger steamer 'Norham Castle,' of four thousand tons, from St Helena to London, a distance of nearly five thousand miles, in thirty-two days. Part of this time

was occupied in coaling at ports along the route. The same tugboat towed the steamship 'Adolph Woermann' from Akassa to Hamburg, a distance of four thousand six hundred miles, in thirty-four days, inclusive of the absolutely necessary stoppages for coaling. In 1875, another tugboat of the same line, the 'Storm Cock,' towed a sailing-ship, the 'Ardencaple,' of nearly two thousand tons register, from Fernando Noronha to Greenock, a distance of about four thousand miles, in thirty days, including stoppages for coaling purposes at St Vincent and Las Palmas. She has also towed the steamer 'Ville de Pernambuco' from Madeira to Antwerp in nine days, and the ill-fated Anchor liner 'Utopia' home from Gibraltar after her collision with Her Majesty's ship 'Anson.'

The tugboat 'Knight of St John' set out from Rio Janeiro for England having in tow a dismasted barque, the 'Royal Alexandra.' When within four hundred miles of St Vincent, she was compelled to abandon her charge in order to obtain coal. She returned, but was unable to find the barque, which eventually reached Barbadoes, was refitted, and came home under her own sails.

Tugboats are not always available when disaster overtakes a trading steamer, and the services of a passing vessel have to be engaged. Early in 1893, a Danish passenger steamship, the 'Hekla,' bound from Copenhagen to New York, broke her shaft three times. There were no fewer than seven hundred people on board at the time, and every one felt more comfortable when a British steamer, the National liner 'America,' took them in tow. They were nearly seven hundred miles from New York, but reached port without further delay, towed by the 'America.' A large steamship of the Dical line, the 'Duke of Sutherland,' with her shaft broken, was picked up at sea by the steamship 'Handel,' and towed six hundred miles to St Vincent, where the necessary repairs were effected to enable her to continue her voyage. A Dutch passenger steamship, the 'P. Caland,' when nearly three hundred miles to the westward of Queenstown, struck a submerged derelict vessel and broke her main shaft. Another steamship, the 'Damara,' homeward bound, fell in with the disabled steamer, and towed her to Queenstown.

A North German Lloyd's steamship, the 'Strassburg,' similarly situated, was towed into New York by the American liner 'Chester.' The Norwegian barque 'Hakon Jarl,' bound from Jamaica to Goole with a cargo of logwood, was left to her fate, in February 1893, about three hundred miles south-west of Scilly, having received serious damage in a hurricane. A Liverpool steamship, the 'Nigretia,' took hold of her, and succeeded in towing this prize to Falmouth. An Italian barque, the 'Velocifero,' bound from the East Indies with a cargo of teak, was picked up by a steamship crossing the Bay of Biscay in June 1891, and towed into Vigo. She was floating bottom upward; but, after waiting in port, was towed to the Clyde with her cargo, nearly twelve months later.

Attempts have been, and are being, made to utilise the tugboat in ways that could not have

seemed possible forty years ago. Long strings of huge hermetically sealed barges, laden with various kinds of cargo, are towed from port to port of the Atlantic coast of the United States; and it is asserted that the tugboat is to be in the near future the freight locomotive of the seas. Enormous rafts of rough timber have been towed down from Nova Scotia to New York; but others have broken adrift before reaching their destination, and been totally lost. The great Leary raft started from Carlton, near St John, New Brunswick, on the 17th of July 1890, and was wrecked near Seal Harbour, Maine, while being towed to New York. This remarkable raft consisted of seven thousand logs of timber, in fourteen equal sections, securely bound together by chains and wire ropes. A long stout chain was connected with each section; a similar chain stretched from each corner of the front of the forward section, to meet the fore-and-aft chain; and at the apex of the chain triangle thus formed was a huge ring, from which two hawsers, seven hundred and fifty feet long, were run to the two tug-boats that had the raft in tow. Six large lamps lit up the raft at night, and it was dragged through the water at the average rate of four miles an hour. A storm came on; the tug-boats had to slip their hawsers; and the raft was resolved into its constituent parts by the combined action of wind and wave. Some of the logs drifted almost across the North Atlantic to Europe, and were reported by ships navigating in the vicinity for many days.

A Mr Moore, of Galveston, proposed to send a raft of Texan yellow-pine logs from that port to London last summer as an experiment. He urged, with some degree of truth, that better weather would be experienced along this route than between St John and New York, so that the risk should be proportionally less. This raft was to consist of three similar sections, firmly spiked together after the manner of a catamaran; and a powerful steamer was to tow it across. Failure would involve a loss of four thousand pounds sterling, and human beings do not appear to have received any consideration as to safety of life. Should success attend the experiment, profit would be high, and other rafts would be despatched in like manner. Apparently, however, this sanguine suggestion has not advanced beyond the initial stage. Still, having regard to the fact that steam-lighters, otherwise known as whalebacks, are carrying cargoes between North America and Europe, it is but a short step to the raft.

Towing in smooth water is not a very difficult operation; but the proper management of a tow-line in a heavy sea requires from the master of a tugboat rather more than ordinary intelligence and experience. Means have been devised to minimise the sudden strains brought upon a tow-line owing to the varying distances between the tugboat and her charge. Chain, wire, hemp, and manilla hawsers are all in use; but perhaps manilla is most in favour. It has a good spring, and is preferred by some before steel hawsers. On board the American tugboat 'Saturn' the wire hawser is wound upon a cylinder driven directly by gearing from her engines. An automatic apparatus

ensures that the hawser shall not be subject to sudden strain above the normal amount. When the strain on the hawser increases, the drum revolves towards the stern of the tugboat, and pays out some of the hawser, which runs in again when the strain is relieved. This give-and-take system prevents the hawser parting, or being damaged, by varying calls upon it.

Masters, officers, and crews of tugboats lead a life of hardship, are as a rule excellent pilots in their own waters, and are indispensable so long as sailing-ships and single-screw steamers keep the seas. Even the crack twin-screw American liner 'Paris' had to suffer the indignity of a tow quite recently, owing to an accident to her rudder. Moreover, it must not be forgotten that the tugboat is frequently called upon in wicked weather to tow the lifeboat to some stranded ship, and gallantly accomplishes her mission. Steam lifeboats, however, are now coming to the front; but for many years the tugboat will assist in the saving of life and property.

THE TENDERFOOT INK-SLINGER.

By W. CARTER PLATT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

A YOUNG man, tall and slight, attenuated by the insidious disease which was with fatal swiftness sapping his springs of life, left the shanty he called his home high up on the rugged, pine-clad slope, and clambered slowly down the half-mile of rough mountain-side that separated it from the point where the turnpike from Caruthersville to 'Frisco crosses the Dawson Ridge. Above, the moon shone clear—almost as clear as day, turning the jagged peaks of the Sierras into crests of frosted silver; and the road, where you could catch a glimpse of it twisting and turning on the lower grade down towards the valley, into a white, tapering serpent.

But in the shade of the pine-trees it was dark. There was no beaten track, and the precarious footing made the descent slow and laborious. The young man, however, knew his ground; and cautiously picking his steps, or forcing aside the scrub that stood in his way, panting, he at last reached the edge of the white road, and sat down in the shadow of the scrub to wait. What was he waiting for? To see the 'Frisco stage pass in the night; to watch its great, yellow, flaming eyes toiling slowly up the long grade; to listen to the snorting of the horses as they gained the summit; to see the huge, lumbering coach rattle past him at a canter; to catch, maybe, a few hoarse words of encouragement flung at the steaming cattle from the heavy-coated, sombrero-capped driver as he braced himself for the rush down the other grade; to look after the great vehicle with its unknown human freight until it disappeared round the corner of the bluff, a couple of hundred yards

ahead ; to crouch there unseen by the passers-by, and to know—to *feel* that for one brief moment at least he was not alone in the terrible midnight solitude of the pine-clad fastnesses of that vast mountain-side. That was all.

Lemuel Garvey was alone in more senses than one. Father, mother, sister, brother, he had none. He was alone—alone, and dying of consumption at twenty-eight. A journalist by profession, he had occupied a sub-editor's desk on one of the 'Frisco dailies until, a year previously, the symptoms of his disease had made themselves too evident to be disregarded, and he had placed himself in the hands of a medical man. It was phthisis. There was no room for doubt, although the complaint was then only in its initial stage. His only chance was to leave his work, flee from the germ-laden city air to the pine-covered mountains, high above the reach of the sea-fog fiend, which every now and then comes rolling in through the Golden Gate to claim its victims.

At twenty-seven, life is very sweet. In haste, the young journalist threw up his appointment and set out for the Sierras. At Breckenridge City, he heard of this hut far up on the lone hillside, and hither he came with his few belongings, a handful of books and a pile of stationery, to live or die as Fate should decree. That was twelve months before, and he was not dead yet. Sometimes he was hopeful, confident that the pure air was working its healing power upon his wasted lungs, and that the progress of the disease had been permanently arrested. But at other times he suffered from fits of despondency, and trod the brink of black despair. At first, the impressive, overwhelming sense of solitude had been almost unbearable after the bustle of city life; but he soon got over that—in the daytime. He made friends with nature, and the birds and flowers were his companions. He took to imaginative writing, which occupied much of his time; and his frequent pilgrimages to Breckenridge City—a mile and a half lower down the turnpike—to procure the necessities of life and transact his small items of business, came as agreeable changes in his monotonous round of existence.

He had, however, never been able to accustom himself to his awful feeling of loneliness at night-time. When the birds went to roost, and the flowers closed their petals, and night swooped down on its dusky pinions upon the Sierras, he was afraid. He knew not of what, but the sense of helpless fear surged up within him; and every alternate night, when he knew the stage was due to pass, he crept timidly down to the track at the Dawson Ridge for one brief moment to be near some human creature—to touch, as it were, the outer hem of his fellow-humanity. Then, when the coach had gone by, he would clamber back to his hut, and fling himself, shuddering, upon the truckle-bed to listen fearfully to every creak of the pine-boughs without, until, out of sheer weariness, he fell asleep, and awoke in broad daylight to laugh at his effeminate fears, which, however, were certain to return at nightfall.

On this particular night the stage rushed

past as usual. With a sigh, Lemuel watched it disappear round the bluff on the mile-and-a-half grade down to Breckenridge City. For a little while he stood motionless by the roadside. Then he was just about to return to his hut, when his practised ear caught the pounding of a horse's hoofs on the hard road from the direction in which the coach had vanished. Wondering who could be abroad at that time of the night, he drew farther into the shade of the brush, and waited. A solitary horseman made his appearance round the bluff, and passed at an easy trot. The moonlight fell full upon his features. Lemuel had no difficulty in recognising him, and a pang of jealousy shot through him as he did so.

"Chaparral Dick!" he muttered inwardly. "I wonder if he's been at Higgins's? What the dickens!"

The unfinished ejaculation was prompted by the inexplicable conduct of the horseman. Fifty yards beyond the spot where Garvey lay hidden, and exactly at the point where the long downgrade towards Caruthersville commences, Chaparral Dick pulled up, sprang from the saddle, and led his horse into the scrub that skirted the opposite side of the road. A minute afterwards, he reappeared, uncoiled something that had been wrapped round his body beneath his shirt, and stooping down, laid his ear close to the track. Then he stepped back into the scrub, and Lemuel, his nocturnal fears temporarily forgotten, waited with suppressed excitement for further developments.

At intervals, Chaparral Dick stepped out on to the track to peer down the long grade and listen. Evidently he had reason for expecting some one to come along from the direction of Caruthersville; but why had he chosen that point for the meeting-place where the roadside cover was thickest? Why had he hidden his horse in the scrub, and why had he unwound the long thing—presumably a lariat—from his body?

An hour passed. For the twentieth time, Chaparral Dick came forth to reconnoitre. This time, instead of quickly retiring again as before, he laid his ear down to the track and listened intently. Then, still crouching low, he remained for some minutes gazing down the slope before retreating into the black shadow. From his place of concealment Lemuel Garvey now heard the faint sound of a horse's hoofs toiling up the grade. Soon a dark object hove in sight, which gradually assumed the outline of a light wagon, with the solitary figure of the driver sharply defined against the moonlit road. The watcher's pulse quickened with a thrill of genuine alarm as he thought of what *might* be about to happen. He had always had an intuitive distrust of dashing, reckless Chaparral Dick, but he had never before suspected him of being a deliberate law-breaker, yet what had passed that night pointed to something very like a contemplated bit of road-agenting business.

His first impulse was to shout to the unknown driver, warning him of the possible danger that awaited him, but somehow his tongue refused its office. The wagon reached the summit of the rise. It was exactly

opposite the scrub. The driver raised his arm to flog the horse into a trot, and in another moment he would be past the unexpected peril—if peril it was—when a lariat shot out with unerring aim from the shadow of the scrub into the moonlight. Without the slightest warning, the driver of the wagon was caught in the raw-hide noose, dragged violently from his seat, and fell with a thud on the hard road, where he lay quite motionless, while his horse, knowing that something was wrong, immediately pulled up.

With sombrero drawn down over his eyes, and the lower half of his face muffled in a scarf, Chaparral Dick crept up behind the fallen man, his right hand grasping the barrel of a revolver, in readiness to knock him senseless with the butt. Apparently, however, the fall from the wagon had rendered such a precaution quite unnecessary, for to all intents the victim was lifeless; and after a cursory examination, the desperado returned the pistol to his hip-pocket, and proceeded to carry out the plans he had evidently carefully matured beforehand with consummate cunning. Quickly removing the lariat from the body, he restored it to its former place of concealment under his shirt. Then he hurriedly searched the pockets of the senseless man until he found a wash-leather bag, which gave forth an agreeable clinking sound as he dipped his hand into it. This he tied up tightly and transferred to his own jacket, and then disappeared into the scrub, to return the next moment, leading his horse.

But his little programme was not yet concluded. Pushing his sombrero back from over his eyes, he removed the scarf which concealed the lower portion of his face and tied it round his waist. Next, he hitched his own horse to the rear of the wagon, and once more approached the heap of luckless humanity lying on the road. Kneeling down, he gently raised the traveller's head, pressed a flask of spirits to his lips, and in various ways affected to act the part of the Good Samaritan. Presently the unconscious man gave signs of returning life, and Chaparral Dick, after lifting him carefully into the wagon, himself jumped up in front, and gathering up the reins, urged the horse into a gentle trot.

Lemuel Garvey, spellbound with horror and amazement, saw it all, and marvelled. Unable to move or speak, he stood rooted to the spot as the wagon passed him, the new driver's horse following behind, and disappeared down the hill in the direction of Breckenridge City. Then the spell left him, and the terrors of the night drove him like a hunted thing back up the mountain-side to his hut, where he flung himself on his couch and tried, with a whirling brain, to think out the situation and decide what course of action he should pursue. What that situation was, it would perhaps be as well here to make a little clearer.

Breckenridge City seems to have escaped the notice of the map-makers—either that, or the chartographers have with common consent agreed to ignore its claims to publicity. Anyhow, there it is, nestling among the foothills of a western spur of the Sierras; and if you were

to rule a perfectly straight line from Carutherville to San Jose, you would divide the city into two equal parts, for Higgins's Hotel would be on one side of the line, and Jake Brownson's store would be on the other, and these two are the only inhabited dwellings in the place. True, there are the remains of half-a-dozen frame-houses that were partially erected by a pushing speculator when the scheme for opening out the Breckenridge Silver Mine was first talked about, and were as speedily dismantled when the project was abandoned. If Breckenridge City was not exactly born before its time, it was at least christened prematurely. Still, for all that, it is a place of considerable importance on a small scale, and does a thriving trade. From miles around, the ranchers come to Brownson's store to procure supplies, and having transacted their business there, step over to the hotel across the way to clinch their bargains, or to transact a little more business of a liquid description. Then, too, Higgins's Hotel is the station where the 'Frisco stage stays to change horses; and, moreover, the place is the mutual rendezvous for the whole district, and the general resort of every individual loafer between Aaron's Flat and Bully Rock.

Bill Higgins, who ran the hotel, had a niece living with him, Flossie Hemmings, a fair, sweet slip of a girl of nineteen, who was better known in the locality as 'The Flower of the Sierras,' or, in its abbreviated form, 'The Flower.' All the older and married habitués of the hotel petted and made much of her; and all the younger men worshipped her, and bought new neckties whenever the opportunity offered. Yet Flossie had not one spark of vanity in her. It was impossible to spoil her, and in spite of all the attentions she received, she remained the same merry, guileless maiden. Not one of the roughest of them but was ready and willing to wipe out in blood the slightest insult to The Flower, and it was only on the very rarest occasions that anything resembling an oath was accidentally allowed to hop out in her presence. Better evidence than that to show the estimation in which she was held, it would be impossible to adduce.

Lemuel Garvey had caught the general contagion, and was particularly hard hit. He had felt it coming on, and had struggled against it—fought against it, for he had recognised the utter folly of a man in his precarious state of health falling in love; but it was no use, and he succumbed to Flossie's charms. Perhaps the very fact of his attempts to stifle his love only made his passion the deeper; or perhaps it was that The Flower exhibited towards him a certain tenderness she showed to none other of her numerous admirers. But be that as it may, the 'Tenderfoot Ink-slinger,' as he was generally called in the neighbourhood, could no longer blind himself to the truth that his life's love was hers; and, in consequence, his visits to Breckenridge City grew more frequent, and day by day he became more and more engrossed in his love of The Flower.

The only other admirer for whom she showed the slightest preference was handsome, dashing Chaparral Dick.

When one of his despondent fits came on, Lemuel shut himself up in his shanty with his load of misery, and looked with a morbid eye on the dark side of things. The girl's tenderness towards him, he told himself, was only prompted by gentle, womanly compassion for his hopeless case. He had her pity—as a lame cur might have it—but her heart was Chaparral Dick's; and, after all, it were far better to die than live to see her another's. But the next day the pain in his chest would perhaps have vanished, and out in the glorious sunshine he would sit with nature smiling all around him, dreaming golden dreams of hope and life—an idyllic life to be spent among the birds and the flowers with a sweeter songstress and a fairer flower than them all. Alas! these alternating hopes and fears were but a symptom of his physical disorder. Latterly, his evil days had been fewer, and he had allowed his hopes to lead him into the firm belief that he was rapidly getting stronger. But even in his most sanguine moments, the thought that possibly Chaparral Dick might be his rival for all that made recovery so precious, uncomfortably obtruded upon his happiness.

As Lemuel lay on his bed, with the memory of the events of the night vividly before him, he was too excited to review the situation calmly, but that did not prevent him from recognising that he had it in his power to cut short Chaparral Dick's career in that corner of the States, and thus increase his chances with The Flower by ridding himself of a dangerously handsome rival; though how to play his hand so that his knowledge should be used to the best advantage, he was not then in a fit state to determine. The thought that he had this man in his power, temporarily banished his sense of loneliness, and with a smile of anticipatory triumph on his face, he fell asleep.

V I P E R I A N A.

By Dr ARTHUR STRADLING, C.M.Z.S., &c.

THE author of 'British Reptiles' Professor Bell, declared himself sceptical as to the validity of any of the reported fatalities from viper-bites occurring in Great Britain, since he had been unable to trace the account to an authentic source in a single instance out of the many which he had investigated. Death from this cause is undoubtedly very rare; but it must be admitted that in the development of medical journalism which has taken place during the last thirty years, at least three cases have obtained a record which is indisputable, while, most unhappily, the past hot summer has added a fourth.

A fatal termination, however, as the more or less remote and indirect result of this injury is not unusual; the bitten person recovers from the shock to the system and all the primary effects of the blood-poisoning, but is never well afterwards, and is carried off by some inconsiderable ailment such as would otherwise have been productive of no more than inconvenience.

An example of this kind came under the writer's observation in Devonshire some years ago. A gentleman, of mighty reputation as a South African sportsman, was walking along the sea-beach not far from Babbacombe, when he saw a snake fall over the cliff from the downs above. Believing it to be an ordinary harmless grass-snake, he picked it up and carried it home, where he and his children actually played with it for two days before it bit him. That event, as might have been expected, happened at last, and he at once recognised the character of his pet; he killed it—as he thought—with the drawing-room poker, and threw it out on the veranda, sent for medical assistance, and took general measures for his own safety, which proved entirely successful. But his butler, whilst examining the apparently dead reptile before casting it into the sea, received a wound on the thumb from the creature, which had been stunned only; and although free cauterisation and other appropriate remedies were resorted to without delay, and the man 'pulled round,' he never regained his former health or strength, and died of rapidly induced consumption a few months later. Permanently paralysed limbs, and even persistent loss of speech, are also occasional *sequela* of viper-bite.

Luckily, as a rule, the patient's restoration is complete; and as a matter of fact, such casualties are rarer in all parts of the world than is commonly supposed. Even in serpent and superstition ridden Hindustan—where, owing to local and special reasons, from twenty to five-and-twenty thousand natives meet with their death annually in this way—the mortality amongst whites is certainly no more than proportionate to that due to carriage and railway accidents here. Of 1321 inquests held in New South Wales—a country teeming with venomous species—in 1892, one only referred to snake-bite. The 'British Medical Journal' of August 29, 1891, records the case of a little girl bitten at Garve, in Ross-shire; and although the adder plunged its fangs full into the flesh of her bare leg, and it was necessary to convey her a distance of fourteen miles to the Cottage Hospital at Dingwall, the child got perfectly well again under treatment. It may be noted that during the summer months of that year, cold and wet as they were, vipers abounded in Scotland. A boy who received a similar bite in Sandown Park on August 18, 1886, made a quick recovery in St Thomas's Hospital; and the late Frank Buckland, when house-surgeon at St George's, was called upon to prescribe for a youth who had meddled to his own detriment with a viper caught on Wandsworth Common. Before Greater London had swallowed its big bites out of Surrey and Middlesex, these reptiles, like many other specimens of our fauna, were found in situations that know them no more; but they have been reported at comparatively recent dates at Willesden, Hornsey, Highgate, and on the open spaces south of the Thames. That they should have been killed in Hyde Park in 1844, or that a boy should have been severely bitten in St John's Wood twelve years earlier, are authenticated facts,

which do not, perhaps, excite much surprise, changed as conditions now are; but it is somewhat startling to read that a live snake was found in the latter locality about a year ago! It turned out to be a *protégé* of Madame Sarah Bernhardt, who was staying in the neighbourhood, being the realistic representative of the asp which she introduced into the death-scene of 'Cleopatra.' More than one viper has made its appearance, unbidden and unwelcomed, in Covent Garden Market, possibly conveyed thither unwittingly in baskets of vegetables—more probably escapes from the stock-in-trade of the dealers in small animals who stand at the corners of that emporium.

Shortly after the Zoological Gardens of London were opened to the public in 1828, two 'promiscuous' vipers, not legitimate inmates of the menagerie—which at that time contained no provision for the accommodation of snakes—were despatched within the precincts. Nothing remarkable about *that*, either, although the date falls well within the recollection of thousands of people now living; for Lord Malmesbury records in his Diary that he shot pheasants in the immediate vicinity at that period; and the Zoological Society were compelled to erect a close fence all around their Gardens to keep out the hares with which Regent's Park was at that time infested, and which did great damage to the flower-beds. Consternation prevailed throughout the first camp established at Bisley when a large and pugnacious adder rose hissing from the heather in close proximity to the tents; but, fortunately, no misadventure resulted from its presence, nor has any subsequent specimen disturbed the peace of mind of that martial gathering. An interest gruesomely romantic attaches to the circumstance that one of the victims of the horrible series of murders committed in Whitechapel a few years since was identified by her sister mainly by the scar of an adder-bite, received near her cottage-home down in Somersetshire whilst she, a happy child, was playing in a hayfield.

Many persons are killed by vipers on the Continent; but—though our own '*Pelias berus*' is widely distributed over Europe, and is generally known distinctively as the 'little viper'—the prevalent and most dangerous species are the long-nosed and asp vipers. Matthioli relates an instance of a man who was fatally bitten by half a snake in France—an adder had been severed in twain with a hoe, and he unfortunately picked up the business end. Such an occurrence is quite within the bounds of credibility; I have seen a wretched python which had been cut in two by a sweep of a coolie's cutlass, launch itself furiously at the man who was preparing to give it the *coup de grde*, and tear the torch from his hands. Domestic animals are not unfrequently attacked, but rarely succumb to the poison; sheep and horses are struck on the nose as they graze, cows very commonly on the udders while lying down. A bitten dog repeatedly plunges its head under water, to assuage the fierce heat of the inflammatory symptoms, but generally recovers. Human beings and monkeys suffer far more intensely than do creatures lower in the scale of life. There is a remarkable account,

vouched for by competent witnesses, of a horse which was found moribund and choking, with its neck enormously swollen, in whose throat a small viper had actually ensconced itself. Mademoiselle Rosa Bonheur lost two gazelles, which she kept in the dual capacity of pets and models, by the assault of adders which swarmed in the country about her château.

There are, as I have said, four cases of death from snake-bite in this country, the record of which is supported by medical testimony—others have doubtless happened. In the summer of 1854, a gipsy child who had thrown herself on the ground by the roadside was bitten on the cheek. Her father crushed the reptile with the heel of his heavy boot, placed it in a cabbage-leaf for identification, and carried it, with the poor little sufferer, to the nearest town—Wingham, in Kent. She was afterwards removed to the Kent and Canterbury Hospital, where she died. A woman fell a victim to a like injury in Epping Forest in 1865. The third case is that of a gentleman named Thompson, who, though wearing knickerbockers, was bitten on the leg at Leith Hill, near Dorking, Surrey, in the month of August 1876, the venom doing its lethal work in forty-eight hours. The neighbourhood of Leith Hill in those days was infested by these pestilent little brutes, and a sport much favoured of the Dorking boys was to hunt and kill them for the sake of their fat, which was—and still is, in some places—saleable as a remedy for sprains, bruises, and rheumatism. The last recorded instance occurred in Glamorganshire on June 3d of 1893, when a lad of eleven died from the infliction of two tiny punctures on the forefinger. Deaths from the bite of a cobra, a puff-adder, and a rattlesnake, captive specimens, have occurred in this country.

There is a widely prevalent but erroneous idea that the venom acquires additional virulence in exceptionally hot weather—a mistake based probably on the circumstance that the great majority of poisonous serpents, as well as those of the worst kind, are found in the tropics. The fact, too, that snakes in general make their appearance, be they aggressive or elusive, only during the hottest season of the year in temperate regions, may perhaps account to some extent for this fallacy. That it is a fallacy has been conclusively demonstrated by scientific experiment; and, indeed, casualties have contributed testimony on this head. A 'snake-charmer,' an Englishman named Drake, was killed at Rouen in 1827 by a rattlesnake which seemed to be numb with the cold. The writer's experience—founded on a life-long observation of these creatures to the number of some thousands of specimens, both in confinement and in their native wilds—is, that a cold snake—unless, of course, it be actually torpid—is preternaturally irritable, and much more disposed to attack than one which is warm. But the common viper is more tolerant of low temperatures, and hibernates less than any other serpent under parallel conditions, occurring farther north in Norway and Sweden, and to greater height on mountain-sides, than the rest of the European *Ophidia*; and has even seemed to turn up more plentifully than

usual in chilly years. Allusion has already been made to its prevalence in 1891, during which year two deaths were registered as attributable to some extent to adder-bites : and 1852—probably on the whole the wettest year of this century, though characterised by a long spring drought—brought anything but a ‘summer of the snakeless meadow.’ Vipers have been reported during the past prolonged dry season in situations where they were previously unknown, such as the banks of ponds, to which they had no doubt resorted in pursuit of prey driven by the absence of water to forsake the higher ground.

From twenty to thirty little adders are produced in one brood, these viperlings being gifted with venom and an instinctive knowledge of its utility from the moment of their birth, despite Gilbert White’s inability to discover their fangs with a magnifying-glass. Every reptile—snake, lizard, crocodilian, or tortoise—is ushered into this world with its development complete and perfect, and competent to take care of itself. I was once watching a lizard wriggle out of the egg ; it stood motionless for a minute or so when free, then sped away. But as it darted off over the hot sand, a fly alighted in its path, and was instantly seized and devoured. Some rattlesnakes, born in my vivarium, killed mice in three seconds, an hour after they saw the light, feeding ravenously. Young vipers—young serpents of all species, in fact—are far more likely, however, to constitute food for other creatures than to find a meal for themselves ; here they are preyed upon by birds, stoats, weasels, polecats, moles, foxes, hedgehogs, toads, rats, and a host of other things. They have been found, in company with wireworms and the destructive larvae of the daddy-longlegs, in the crop of a pheasant ; and peacocks are so partial to this piquant fare that they will sometimes desert the home where they are regularly fed in districts abounding with adders.

The bite of any viper requires very deep excision—deeper than would be called for in a case of cobra-bite—owing to the length of the movable fangs. Two punctures, from one-third to half an inch apart, are generally visible ; but where the finger is struck, one fang not uncommonly misses altogether. In a bygone (though not very remote) period, when to make the patient drunk as speedily as possible was the standard remedial course, soldiers on foreign stations have been known to prick themselves artistically with thorns, and rush off howling to the surgeon, in order to obtain a copious libation of brandy gratis. There can be no question as to the value of stimulants in accidents of this sort, if administered at the proper time, though nitrite of amyl, ether, or ammonia would be infinitely more efficacious than ordinary spirituous liquors ; but I believe that a fatal result is often precipitated, instead of avoided, by injudicious stimulation at the outset. The vulgar error that a person will take no harm if bitten when in a state of intoxication is too patent in its absurdity to call for refutation—such a one would certainly succumb the more quickly by reason of his condition.

Mysterious as is the death-dealing effect of so

minute an injection of this scarcely modified saliva, its potency is not without parallel elsewhere in the organic world. The perception by our olfactory nerves of so imponderable a quantity as the one-millionth part of a grain of certain substances is at least as remarkable ; and the murderous though curiously limited power of the tsetse fly of tropical Africa perhaps even more so. But, after all, there is nothing more wonderful than the tremendously disproportionate irritation produced by the poison instilled by the barely visible hair of a stinging nettle, especially in the case of some species which flourish in other lands. The indented nettle (*Urtica crenulata*)—a common form in the tropics) will give rise to pain and bodily fever lasting for months ; and Schleiden saw a limb amputated in Timor, owing to gangrene which resulted from the sting of the Devil’s-leaf nettle (*U. urentissima*). Viper-venom, like most other poisons, organic and inorganic, has been used in medicine ; and that it was so employed in this country at an early date is proved by the fact that allusion was made thereto by Canon Derham in a sermon preached in St Mary-le-Bow Church in 1711. Pliny, Galen, and the older writers appear to indicate that the flesh of the reptile rather than the secretion of its glands found a place in the Pharmacopœias of their respective ages. To this day, the shed skins, or ‘sloughs,’ have a reputation in all parts of the world as a remedy for chronic headache and loss of voice, bound about the temples or the throat ; the keepers in the Reptilium at the Zoo are frequently asked for pieces by sufferers from such ailments. France was formerly the centre for the collection and export of viperish drug-products, which were subject to a duty of four shillings per pound ; but that interest would seem to have declined, since ten thousand represents the yearly average of those killed, now that the reward has been cut down to twenty-five centimes for each, whereas it reached the respectable figure of seventeen thousand twenty years ago, when the premium was double. Those who extract the fat profess a singular notion that it is valueless as an ointment if the snake ‘breaks its poison-bags’ before death.

Even the bite of the adder has been accredited with curative properties, and has ranked in the vast category of specifics for hydrophobia. In 1805, M. Gauchi, the Mayor of Reorte, during an epidemic of this dread disease, advocated that all affected by it, men and animals alike, should be submitted to the fangs of a viper which had been previously bitten by a hydrophobic dog !

The dissimilarity between the harmless grass-snake (*Tropidonotus matrix*) of this island and the viper, both in form and coloration as well as in habitat, is so pronounced that it is impossible for any one who has seen the two to mistake the one for the other ; but a near relative of the former, the viperine snake (*T. viperinus*), which abounds throughout the south of Europe, actually simulates the venomous species so closely that it requires a practised ophiologist to discriminate between them. Furthermore, in some situations—in the Pyre-

nees, for instance—the viper is usually of a pinkish or salmon-coloured hue underneath, instead of white, and in those same regions its mimic adopts a like tinge on its ventral scales. Of the very few serpents which exhibit any outward mark of distinction between the sexes, the adder is one, though to no greater extent than might enable a student of the subject to pick out sixty in a hundred with confidence. The puff-adder, Merrem's snake, and, in a very slight degree, the boa-constrictor and rattle-snake, are the only species besides which manifest a similar sexual dimorphism. It is a strange circumstance that this should be so rare as to be practically unknown amongst reptiles, when it is displayed at its maximum in their first-cousins the birds.

Serpents do not augment their doubtful popularity by the way they have of appearing suddenly in places where they are not expected, and by no means desired—I know of one which was found snugly curled up on the hearth-rug before a drawing-room fire, one chilly August day, at Pinner, in Middlesex, within a few minutes' hail of metropolitan railway station; and another that left its just-cast slough on the top of a four-post bed; but one does not often hear of a viper in a church. Some twenty years ago, however, one presented itself at the side entrance of Biddenden Parish Church during afternoon service, to the progress of which it caused considerable disturbance, and managed to ensconce itself under the harmonium before decisive measures were taken for its ejection and ultimate slaughter. Though staying in the immediate neighbourhood, I was not at church on this particular occasion; but the event is indelibly impressed on my memory by the fact that when the topic led up, not unnaturally, to the mention of serpent-worship at the dinner-table that night, and a lady asked the meaning of the word 'ophiolatry,' a clergyman made the appalling observation that it was a heathen form of Adderion!

A chronicle of all the superstitions which have obtained in the past or still prevail concerning this little reptile would stock a library. It is popularly alleged throughout Europe that the leaves of the common ash will not only cure the bite, but, employed with suitable rites, will prevent it; while the Devonshire peasant believes that no viper has power to cross a circle traced around it when asleep with an ashen staff. This latter is, at any rate, difficult of disproof, since snakes have no eyelids, and, being consequently incapable of shutting their eyes, can give no evidence of sleep.

In conclusion, let me narrate without comment a circumstance which may have a possible bearing on a much-vexed question. At the commencement of last summer (1893), a viper was brought to me as having swallowed her young ones. The act of deglutition had not been observed; but while my informant was engaged in killing the creature with a light stick, a little one was ejected by the mother from her mouth in her death-throes—on this point he was absolutely certain, and he had killed the baby as well, and offered it for my inspection along with the body of the

adult, around the throat of which a string was tightly tied, to prevent the escape of the remainder of the brood. But, alas! the snakeling was not a viper at all, but a tiny, newly hatched specimen of the grass-snake, evidently the product of one of a batch of soft-shelled eggs which the adder—a male—had lately eaten. The rest of them—about half-a-dozen in number, as far as I could judge, and all fertile—I found in the poor beast's stomach.

NO. '3, 7, 77.'

To the majority of readers, the above figures convey no meaning, and yet these mystic symbols have caused many a strong man to tremble with terror, many an evil-doer to pale with dread, and suddenly to 'fold his tent and silently steal away.' This No. '3, 7, 77' is the warning notice and the signature of the Vigilantes of the Far West.

The law-breakers, no matter of what class or particular line, thoroughly appreciate its full value, and rarely fail to profit by it. The Vigilantes work unseen, unheard, but with a tenacity that never fails. They rarely appear on the surface, but the results of their action show plainly enough. One warning is usually all that is given; if this is neglected, woe betide the person to whom that warning is sent. An outsider could almost believe that these mysterious papers are sometimes delivered by supernatural means, as locked doors and barred windows present no obstacles to that little sheet in red letters, lying prominently on the table. Many a marauder or frontier ruffian, returning to his lonely cabin in the mountains after a horse-stealing expedition, has been surprised and terrified to find a slip of paper on his table, giving him twenty-four hours to leave the country, with these dreaded numbers as a signature. An early riser taking a morning stroll through a mountain town has sometimes seen these little slips neatly pasted outside the doors of certain houses, and the dwellers therein have declared that these papers were not there at midnight. A game of cards once being played in a saloon by four desperadoes, a new pack was handed to them in its original sealed wrapper. When opened, on the ace of clubs was found written in red ink: "'3, 7, 77"—24 hours to leave. Pass this card to the other three.' They left that night!

Western Vigilantes do not act on sudden impulse. They have been called into existence by the impossibility of having cattle and horse-thieves, 'road-agents' (a polite term for murderous highwaymen), and highwaymen convicted or proportionately punished for their crimes—amongst which murder is a common one—owing to the gross venality of the people from whom the average juries are drawn; also to the sharp practices of tricky lawyers, who constantly secure acquittals through some technicality or flaw in the indictment; also to the wording of many of the laws, by which the accused is hedged round with safeguards and the prosecution with difficulties. All these causes combined drove the ranchman, the stockman, and the gold-miner, in sheer despair to form a

mutual Association among themselves to protect their hardly earned property and their lives from the scoundrels and human beasts of prey who fattened off them, and who ruthlessly shot them down in cold blood if they remonstrated.

There is no resemblance between the sudden frenzied action of an excited mob and the action of the Vigilantes. The latter closely examine and make full inquiry into all cases brought under their notice; a special Committee is appointed for this purpose. A month or more may be occupied in their inquiries. A report is made in full meeting, and the matter is put to vote, a majority of those present deciding. A notice or warning is never sent out until the question of the absolute guilt of the accused party is beyond doubt. If he refuses to avail himself of his chance to leave, he remains at his own risk. The Vigilantes are simply a self-constituted internal police—illegal, of course, but of such inestimable value to the peaceable and law-abiding citizens, that no attempt is made to have the former prosecuted. Honest people have nothing to fear from them; they exist solely for the repression of crime; and had it not been for the Vigilantes in Montana in the sixties, and at the present time in places, no honest man could have lived or owned property in peace or security. The law was powerless; the desperadoes held the balance of power, and the situation was rapidly approaching one of anarchy, when the Vigilantes suddenly appeared, and restored complete order and quietness in three days' time. It required the hanging of nine ringleaders to do this; but after that, life and property were safe. The lesson was a sharp and severe one, but necessary and most wholesome.

In times of quiet and peace, the Vigilantes do not meet; but when occasion requires, they are alert at a moment's notice. A peculiar dread on the part of the Western ruffian is the uncertainty from whom and where his notice emanates. He may be drinking at the bar with a Vigilante; he may buy his groceries or feed his horse at the store or stable of another; the quiet, well-dressed banker who cashes his cheque, or the loud-voiced village oracle, may all be members, and he feels uncomfortable accordingly. He is afraid to express his burning desire to 'wipe out' every member of that accursed 3, 7, 77 gang, as he terms them, for fear he might be confiding in one of the gang themselves. But although he would gladly and cheerfully murder them all if he safely could, he usually complies with their request to move his quarters, and rarely waits until his twenty-four hours' limit has expired.

The Vigilantes have a thorough system of their own of private inquiry and espionage as well. Many a thief has mentally wondered, with much unnecessary profanity, how it was known that he had appropriated some neighbour's calf, colt, or horse. Each district has its own Committee. This Committee does not work outside its district, save in special cases. Committees assist each other when required to do so. In heavy cases Committees will join together. In such an event, from five hundred to a thousand men can be centred at any given spot on very short notice. When action is needed,

every member must attend the rendezvous, absolute incapacity from illness being the only excuse admitted. All business and pleasure matters must stand to one side. The members are bound to secrecy, and to help and assist each other in all cases of emergency—to an extreme limit. The obligation is a stringent one. No one is admitted as a member unless he is well reported on by other members. An executive Committee is formed of picked men only, who do all the preliminary work, do it skilfully and thoroughly, and do not state the result of their labours until on the eve of carrying out their plans. By this means, the chances of indiscreet members babbling is lessened, as they know nothing about the time of action until the time arrives.

As an illustration of how thorough the Vigilantes are in their methods, I may give the following: Two 'road-agents' in Montana had killed without any provocation two passengers on a stagecoach in open daylight. The agents, well mounted, started at once to leave the country. Three Vigilantes followed them. Day by day the latter gained information of their quarry in advance. The mountain passes and resting-places in the West are comparatively few, and well known. So this part of the chase was easy. Day after day the Vigilantes followed the trail, but failed to overtake the road-agents, who, well knowing the character of the sleuth-hounds on their track, were forcing their tired horses towards the South. The latter at last gave out—the agents stole two fresh ones from a stable, and renewed their flight through Idaho, down into Utah, and across to Nevada—the hunters behind them tracking day by day and hour by hour. At last the Vigilantes overtook their men, and two ringing shots from Winchester rifles ended that chapter. A local paper afterwards stated that 'The bodies of two men, each shot through the heart, were found yesterday on the roadside. They had a considerable sum in gold on their persons, but no papers to identify them by. It is supposed that this was Vigilante work, as robbery evidently was not an object—their pockets having been undisturbed.' '3, 7, 77—relentless, slow, but deadly sure, had again vindicated itself.'

T. L.

SONNET.

The thrush is hid within the emerald bough,
As the June sun dips in the western sea;
But I can hear the wild notes merrily,
Like marriage bells across the wintry snow.
Good is the omen! Where the roses blow
In the old garden, to the wicket gate
I bend swift steps of love, for there my fate
Sweet lips shall seal to-night, and I shall know
If she I love will put her hand in mine,
And say: 'Dearest, I yield thee steadfast faith,
And promise to be thy true wife till death!'
O crowning height of bliss, dearer than wine,
Sweeter than song, richer than jewelled crown!
Her heart to mine linked evermore as one.

WILLIAM COWAN.

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